

IN THE CLAIMS:

1 - 26 (Cancelled)

27. (Currently amended) A strip-casting machine comprising two casting rolls arranged parallel to each other, two side plates, and a standard for supporting the two casting rolls, wherein the two side plates are movable against the end surfaces of the casting rolls into a setting position, further comprising a side plate changing device for each side plate, wherein each side plate changing device is comprised of a carrier element for a side plate, and wherein the carrier element is movable downward together with the side plate from the setting position and back up again into the setting position, wherein the casting rolls have axes, wherein the carrier element comprises means for moving the side plate in a first step in a direction extending essentially parallel to the axes of the casting rolls and away from the end surface of the casting rolls, and wherein the carrier element comprises means for moving the side plate in a second step around a swivel axis or along a curve.

28. (Previously presented) The strip-casting machine according to Claim 27, wherein the carrier element is comprised as a support arm.

29. (Currently amended) The strip-casting machine according to Claim ~~1~~ 27, wherein the carrier element is movable together with the side plate in a plane which extends at a certain distance from the end surfaces of the casting rolls.

30. (Previously presented) The strip-casting machine according to Claim 27, wherein the carrier element is movable together with the side plate in a plane extending essentially parallel to the end surfaces of the casting rolls.

31. (Canceled)

32. (Currently amended) The strip-casting machine according to claim ~~31~~ 27, wherein the carrier element comprises means for moving the side plate vertically in a second step.

33. (Canceled)

34. (Currently amended) The strip-casting machine according to Claim 31, wherein the carrier element is ~~configured to move~~ comprises means for moving the side plate in an essentially horizontal direction.

35. (Previously presented) The strip-casting machine according to Claim 34, wherein the casting rolls have bearing points located on a level, further comprising a horizontal displacement path for effecting the horizontal movement of the side plate, wherein the horizontal displacement path is located approximately on a level below of the bearing points of the casting rolls.

36. (Previously presented) The strip-casting machine according to Claim 35, wherein the horizontal displacement path is configured to guide the side plate to a side plate changing station.

37. (Previously presented) The strip-casting machine according to Claim 27, wherein the side plate is movable downwardly between bearing journals of the casting rolls, wherein the casting rolls are movable a certain distance apart.

38. (Previously presented) The strip-casting machine according to Claim 27, further comprising a setting device for moving the side plate between the setting position and a casting position by means of piston-cylinder units.

39. (Previously presented) The strip-casting machine according to Claim 38, wherein the setting device is mounted on the standard and is connectable to the side plate and disconnectable from the side plate while the side plate is in the setting position.

40. (Previously presented) The strip-casting machine according to Claim 28, wherein the side plate is connected to the support arm when the plate is in the casting position.

41. (Previously presented) The strip-casting machine according to Claim 27, wherein the side plate is movable downwardly together with the setting device.

42. (Previously presented) The strip-casting machine according to Claim 27, wherein the side plate is movable downwardly between the end surfaces of the rolls and standard.

43. (Previously presented) The strip-casting machine according to Claim 28, wherein the support arm comprises a vertical portion and a horizontal portion, and wherein the horizontal portion is connected to a stroke device.

44. (Previously presented) The strip-casting machine according to Claim 27, wherein the side plates comprise electromagnetic coils for generating an electromagnetic field for sealing a roll gap.

45. (Previously presented) The strip-casting machine according to Claim 27, further comprising intermediate pieces insertable between the side plate and the setting device for accommodating casting rolls with different barrel widths.

46. (Previously presented) The strip-casting machine according to Claim 27, comprising two side plate changing devices on each side of the casting rolls, wherein a first side plate changing device is configured to carry away a worn-out side plate and a second side plate changing device is configured to supply a new side plate.

47. (Previously presented) The strip-casting machine according to Claim 28, wherein the support arm is configured to move the side plates from the setting position in an inert gas-filled chamber through a closable opening and into a transfer lock chamber.

48. (Previously presented) The strip-casting machine according to Claim 47, wherein the side plate is movable from the transfer lock chamber by a relative movement between the side plate changing device and the transfer lock chamber, further comprising a transport device for moving the side plate to a side plate holding chamber and back from the side plate holding chamber.

49. (Previously presented) The strip-casting machine according to Claim 27, wherein the side plate comprises a heating device with a supply line, wherein the supply line remains connected to a heating medium during movement of the side plate.

50. (Previously presented) The strip-casting machine according to Claim 28, wherein the carrier element, the support arm, or the setting device are configured to accept connectable and disconnectable feed lines for coolants, for electrical or hydraulic energy, or for other media or to accept measuring and control lines for the side plate.